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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL CHILD LABOR COMMITTEE

*Held in the City of New York, February 14-16, 1905.*

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BY SAMUEL McCUNE LINDSAY, PH. D., Professor of Sociology in the University of Pennsylvania and Secretary of the National Child Labor Committee.

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The National Child Labor Committee was organized in New York City April 15, 1904, as the outcome of a well-considered effort to nationalize the anti-child labor movement on the part of the late William H. Baldwin, Jr., Edgar Gardner Murphy, Felix Adler and Mrs Florence Kelley, all of whom had been active in work of a similar character along state and local lines. Mr. Murphy had secured some legislation after a long and difficult struggle in the state of Alabama, and in the course of that struggle had become convinced that the problem was a national one rather than a state or sectional question. The persons referred to invited a number of representative citizens from different parts of the country to unite with them in the formation of a National Committee, with headquarters in New York City. The committee, therefore, is a self-constituted and self-perpetuating body, and up to the present time an unincorporated society, whose program is partially embodied in the following official statement of objects:

## *Objects.*

To promote the welfare of society, with respect to the employment of children in gainful occupations.

To investigate and report the facts concerning child labor.

To raise the standard of public opinion and parental responsibility with respect to the employment of children.

To assist in protecting children by suitable legislation against premature or otherwise injurious employment, and thus to aid in securing for them an opportunity for elementary education and

physical development sufficient for the demands of citizenship and the requirements of industrial efficiency.

To aid in promoting the enforcement of laws relating to child labor.

To co-ordinate, unify and supplement the work of state or local child labor committees, and encourage the formation of such committees where they do not exist.

The committee at the present time is composed of the following members:

MISS JANE ADDAMS, Hull House, Chicago, Ill.

FELIX ADLER, New York City. Leader of the Society for Ethical Culture; Professor of Political and Social Ethics, Columbia University.

REV. JOHN G. ANDERSON, Tampa, Fla.

REV. NEAL L. ANDERSON, Montgomery, Ala. Member of Alabama Child Labor Committee.

MRS. EMMONS BLAINE, Chicago, Ill. Member of Chicago City Homes Association.

JOHN GRAHAM BROOKS, Cambridge, Mass. President of American Social Science Association and of National Consumers' League.

A. J. CASSATT, Haverford, Pa. President of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

EDGAR E. CLARK, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Grand Chief Conductor, Order of Railway Conductors of America; member of the National Anthracite Coal Commission.

HON. GROVER CLEVELAND, Princeton, N. J. Ex-President of the United States.

HON. ROBERT W. DE FOREST, New York City. President Charity Organization Society of the City of New York; Chairman New York State Tenement House Commission of 1900; First Tenement House Commissioner of the City of New York, 1902-03; Vice-President Central Railroad of New Jersey; Attorney-at-Law.

EDWARD T. DEVINE, New York City. General Secretary, Charity Organization Society of the City of New York; editor of *Charities*, and director New York School of Philanthropy; Professor of Social Work in Columbia University.

MRS. SARAH S. PLATT DECKER, Denver, Col. President General Federation of Women's Clubs.

CHARLES W. ELIOT, Cambridge, Mass. President, Harvard University.

ARTHUR F. ESTABROOK, Boston, Mass. Banker.

HON. N. B. FEAGIN, Birmingham, Ala. Judge in the City Court; Leader in Penal and Humanitarian Reform.

HON. HOMER FOLKS, New York City. Secretary State Charities Aid Association; formerly Commissioner of Public Charities of New York City.

HUGH F. FOX, Plainfield, N. J. President New Jersey Children's Protective Alliance.

EDWARD W. FROST, Milwaukee, Wis. Attorney-at-law; President Children's Betterment League.

HIS EMINENCE JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS, Baltimore, Md.

RT. REV. DAVID H. GREER, New York City. Bishop Coadjutor, Episcopal Diocese of New York.

HON. J. B. GASTON, Montgomery, Ala. Member of Alabama Child Labor Committee.

WILLIAM E. HARMON, New York City. Real Estate broker.

HON. CLARK HOWELL, Atlanta, Ga. Editor of *Atlanta Constitution*.

ROBERT HUNTER, New York City. Chairman, New York Child Labor Committee.

JOHN S. HUYLER, New York City. President of Huyler's.

MRS. FLORENCE KELLEY, New York City. Secretary of National Consumers' League.

JAMES H. KIRKLAND, Nashville, Tenn. Chancellor of Vanderbilt University.

HON. BEN B. LINDSEY, Denver, Col. Judge of Juvenile Court.

STANLEY McCORMICK, Chicago, Ill. Comptroller, International Harvester Co.

V. EVERIT MACY, New York City. Treasurer, People's Institute; Member of the University Settlement Society; Trustee of Teachers' College.

HON. BEVERLEY B. MUMFORD, Richmond, Va. State Senator.

EDGAR GARDNER MURPHY, New York City. Secretary Southern Education Board; Chairman, Alabama Child Labor Committee.

ADOLPH S. OCHS, New York City. Publisher of *New York Times*, *Philadelphia Public Ledger* and *Chattanooga Times*.

GIFFORD PINCHOT, Washington, D.C. Forester, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

ISAAC N. SELIGMAN, New York City. Banker.

HON. HOKE SMITH, Atlanta, Ga. Attorney-at-law; Ex-Secretary of Interior.

SAMUEL SPENCER, New York. President Southern Railway.

J. W. SULLIVAN, New York City. Typographical Union.

GRAHAM TAYLOR, Chicago, Ill. Warden, Chicago Commons; Editor, *The Commons*.

HON. BENJAMIN R. TILLMAN, Trenton, S. C. United States Senator.

PAUL M. WARBURG, New York City. Banker.

MISS LILLIAN D. WALD, New York City. Founder and head worker Henry Street Settlement (Nurses' Settlement).

TALCOTT WILLIAMS, Philadelphia, Pa.

REV. C. B. WILMER, Atlanta, Ga. Secretary, Georgia Child Labor Committee.

JOHN W. WOOD, New York City. Corresponding Secretary, Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church.

Some time was necessary to perfect the plans for organization. Executive officers were not elected and headquarters opened until July 19, 1904, and effective work was actually begun in September, 1904. It was felt, however, that the wide scope of the work before the committee required the early assembling of the entire committee in New York city, and in connection with such a meeting it

was determined to hold the first annual meeting and to make this the occasion for a general survey of the field of work upon which the committee had entered. The program arranged for the three sessions was as follows:

*First Session.*

Tuesday, February 14, 8 p. m., Assembly Hall, United Charities Building, Fourth Avenue and Twenty-second Street.

Presiding officer, Dr. Felix Adler, chairman of the National Child Labor Committee.

General Topic: "The Forces Arrayed Against Child Labor and their Better Utilization."

1. Letters read from Cardinal Gibbons and others.
2. Opening remarks by the presiding officer.
3. "The Church," Right Rev. William N. McVickar, D. D., Bishop of Rhode Island.
4. "The School," James H. Kirkland, Chancellor, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.
5. "Organized Labor," Edgar E. Clark, Grand Chief Conductor of the Order of Railway Conductors, Cedar Rapids, Ia.
6. "Employers of Labor," Rev. Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, Professor of Rabbinical Literature in the University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.
7. Concluding remarks by the chairman.

*Second Session.*

Wednesday, February 15, 3 p. m., Assembly Hall, United Charities Building.

Presiding officer, Homer Folks, vice-chairman of the National Child Labor Committee.

General topic: "Review of Legislation on Child Labor, Methods of Enforcement and Present Problems in the Several States and Territories."

1. Opening remarks by the presiding officer.
2. "The Test of Effective Legislation," Owen R. Lovejoy, assistant secretary of the National Committee.
3. "Legislation and Methods in the Western States," Judge Ben B. Lindsey, Juvenile Court, Denver, Col.
4. "Legislation and Methods in the Northern Central States," Hon. Halford Erickson, Commissioner of Labor, Wisconsin.
5. "Legislation and Methods in the New England and Middle

States," Mrs. Florence Kelley, secretary of National Consumers' League.

6. "Legislation and Methods in the Southern States," Rev. Neal L. Anderson, Montgomery, Ala.

7. "Some Physiological Reasons Why the Premature Employment of Children Under Modern Industrial Conditions is a Menace to the Race," Dr. L. Emmett Holt, New York City.

8. "The Work of Women's Clubs in Securing Child Labor Legislation," Mrs. A. O. Granger, Cartersville, Ga., chairman, Child Labor Committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.

9. "What the State Owes the Child," Samuel McCune Lindsay, secretary of the National Committee.

### *Third Session.*

Thursday, February 16, 8 p. m., Cooper Union, Fourth Avenue and Eighth Street.

Presiding officer, Dr. Felix Adler, chairman of the National Committee.

General topic: "The Need of Protective Legislation for Working Children."

1. "The Evils of Child Labor," Felix Adler, chairman of the National Committee.

2. "The Child Labor Situation in Southern Industry," A. J. McKelway, Charlotte, N. C., assistant secretary of the National Committee.

3. "Child Labor Legislation, a Requisite for Industrial Efficiency," Jane Addams, Hull House, Chicago.

This program was carried out almost to the letter. Unfortunately Dr. Felix Adler, the chairman of the committee, was prevented from being present, and the first meeting was opened by remarks from the secretary, who took the chair and spoke in part as follows:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: It is a very serious responsibility that has fallen to the lot of the secretary of the committee in taking the chair at the opening of the first annual meeting of our National Committee, and I am sure it is a source of great regret to us all, as it is to the chairman himself, that Dr. Adler cannot be with us. He is confined to the house through illness, and I know that his disappointment is doubly great because he has looked forward with so

much enthusiasm and interest to this meeting. All of you know Dr. Adler personally, and know what moral earnestness he puts into any work he undertakes. We cannot overestimate the rare skill and the great enthusiasm he brings to our cause. You will understand how carefully he has planned and with what thought he has worked to make successful this, our first annual gathering in order to push forward the great work which our committee has undertaken. I am very sure that I cannot in any sense undertake to fill his place on this occasion; but I can, perhaps, take the program as outlined here and present to you the list of the speakers.

The assistant secretary, Mr. Lovejoy, will read a few of the letters which we have received within the past few days from prominent persons in all parts of the country, indicating the widespread support and intense interest which is being given to the child labor discussion. There are special reasons why we should take time on this program to read a few from among many such letters, and I will ask Mr. Lovejoy to read one from Cardinal Gibbons, one from Mr. Edgar E. Clark, the Grand Chief Conductor of the Order of Railway Conductors of America; a telegram from the Chief Factory Inspector of Pennsylvania, Captain Delaney; and another from a prominent lawyer.

MR. LOVEJOY:

*Secretary's Office, Cardinal's Residence, 408 Charles Street.  
BALTIMORE, Md., February 12, 1905.*

MR. SAMUEL McCUNE LINDSAY.

*Dear Sir:* I regret that I cannot attend the annual meeting of the National Child Labor Committee in New York next Tuesday night. I shall then be on my way to keep an engagement in Cincinnati.

I beg to assure you, however, that I am in accord with the purposes of this meeting. I shall be glad to endorse any adequate and just means that you may see fit to adopt to prevent the employment of children at an age when they need the home and school for their proper development physically, socially and morally.

If some course can be adopted whereby the fathers of large families may be enabled to provide for the wants of their growing children without feeling the necessity of turning their little ones into the shops as bread-winners, I think a good step will have been taken to prepare the way for laws prohibitive of child labor.

Wishing you all success in your deliberations, I beg to remain

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) J. CARDINAL GIBBONS.

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*Order of Railway Conductors of America.*

CEDAR RAPIDS, Ia., Feb. 10, 1905.

SAMUEL M. LINDSAY, Secretary National Child Labor Committee, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City.

*Dear Sir:* Confirming my telegram of even date herewith, I regret to be obliged to say that imperative business matters render it impossible for me to attend your meetings of the 14th, 15th and 16th and the dinner on the evening of February 15th, to which I have been kindly invited. I regret my inability to be present. I should be deeply interested in the discussions which will be presented on this all-important subject. I hail with delight the organization of this National Committee because I believe that it is the right step in the direction of methodical and effective work. Much has been done in a sort of spasmodic way. Organized labor, wherever it has got on its feet with sufficient security to permit of its giving thought to any subject aside from its own immediate struggle for existence, has raised its voice in opposition to child labor. This is not, as some charge, indicative of selfishness or desire to promote self-interest on the part of the working men. Organization among working men is a cropping out of that hope for better things which is ever present and is evidence of a desire on the part of working men to see their loved ones enjoy the fullest possible and a reasonable measure of the comforts of life, and their interest in the subject of child labor is a reflection of their desire to have their children, in turn, enjoy better conditions of health and life and work than they enjoy themselves.

Child labor, as practiced in many places, especially where the largest numbers of children are employed, is the mortgaging beyond redemption of the health and the moral and physical welfare of generations yet unborn. I look for far-reaching and great good to come from this organized and systematized effort to reasonably regulate the employment of children, and shall be glad at all times to do what little may be within my power to do to assist in that work.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) EDGAR E. CLARK, *Grand Chief Conductor.*

HARRISBURG, Pa., February 14, 1905.

DR. FELIX ADLER, Assembly Hall, United Charities Building, Fourth Avenue and Twenty-second Street, New York.

Regret my inability to be with you to-night. Am pressing for new legislation before the present legislature, which, if passed, will enable this department to more rapidly improve conditions of working children. In two years we have dismissed from factories and workshops and sent to the schools nearly four thousand children. Our whole heart is enlisted in the cause, and we will, if spared, place Pennsylvania at head of column of states against the cruel evil of child labor. Your own splendid work is aiding us greatly. God bless you for it.

J. C. DELANEY, *Chief Factory Inspector.*



*J. H. Ralston, F. L. Siddons, H. T. Newcomb.*

*Ralston & Siddons,  
Attorneys and Counsellors at Law.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., February 13, 1905.

DR. SAMUEL McCUNE LINDSAY, Secretary National Child Labor Committee,  
105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City.

*My Dear Mr. Lindsay:* I have just received an invitation to attend the first annual meeting of the National Child Labor Committee, and do not wish to let it go without saying that if my engagements here were not quite imperative I should attend the meeting. There is no exercise of the police power of government which seems to me so necessary as that which would protect young children against the invasion of their rights of development, which is certain in any industrial community which does not forbid their working for wages and command school attendance.

With sincere regards, I remain

Very sincerely yours,  
(Signed) H. T. NEWCOMB.

THE CHAIRMAN: The last letter to which we have listened has for me a peculiar interest because it comes from an able writer and well-known authority on transportation and railroad problems, one who has given expert service to the government, is a trained economist, and I think I may add, a democrat of the old school, who looks with apprehension upon any extension of governmental activity and even upon undue exercise of the police power of government. Please note that he says: "There is no exercise of the police power of government which seems to me so necessary as that which would protect young children against the invasion of their rights of development."

The National Child Labor Committee has been organized but a very short time. The meeting for the purpose of organization was held in New York City last April, and several months elapsed before an executive office could be established and the machinery for practical work set in motion. Therefore we have been at work practically only three or four months, gathering data from all parts of the country, collecting literature and information concerning the laws, the economic and industrial conditions together with the sentiment prevailing in the different communities with respect to the protection of children.

The National Committee stands sponsor for the interest of 29,000,000 children—there being that many under sixteen years of age in the United States,—all in need of protection for their proper

development, educationally, industrially, morally and physically. The committee, in a measure, stands for those progressive movements which undertake to look after and voice the interests of this great part of our population. The committee was not organized with the intention of supplanting or taking the place of the local efforts made in the various parts of the country to do this work, but rather to co-operate with and to strengthen the hands of the bodies organized for this work, or those making this a special feature of the work of their organization. Women's clubs throughout the country have taken this matter up through various organizations and through their national organization; and the head of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Mrs. Sarah S. Platt Decker, of Denver, a member of the National Committee, expected to be here at this meeting, but was unavoidably detained at the last moment. The Consumers' Leagues have undertaken this as a definite part of their work; in fact, it was through their efforts that marked interest in this cause was aroused throughout the country; and the National Consumers' League, the efficient secretary of which, Mrs. Florence Kelley, a member of this committee, has done a very great deal toward making our work practical. Our committee has not been organized to take the place of any other existing committee or any other organizations established for securing more adequate laws or better enforcement of existing legislation; nor was it organized for the purpose of securing national legislation, for we are far removed from the point where we can deal with this matter legislatively in a national way. Our chief purpose is to develop a national sentiment for the protection of children and to make the power of public sentiment felt in all localities, to raise the standard gradually in the different communities, and to have a standard established where none exists at present; to meet industrial and economic conditions in this country in the way acknowledged as best by those who know those conditions best. Therefore, if we keep these two thoughts in mind, any reasonable opposition to the work of this committee may be met—and I am glad to say no such opposition has been expressed. On the contrary, on all sides, from all parts of the country we have been favored with the most enthusiastic endorsement of our work. That it will be an arduous work, requiring time, patience and skill, we shall realize more and more at this meeting as the representatives of the various

factors arrayed against the evils of child labor tell us about the conditions existing in their particular fields.

The first speaker on the program to-night comes from a state not selected for its size nor yet for the particularly high standard which it maintains in the matter of child labor legislation. However, I am glad to say that powerful influences are at work in that state—and of these influences the speaker at this meeting is a leader—to introduce a higher standard. A bill is now pending before the legislature which we hope will succeed in placing Rhode Island on a par with the best legislation in this matter in New England, if not in the country. While our speaker was not chosen because of the size of the state which he represents, we did not choose a small man. We chose a man whose mind is as large as his body and whose heart is larger than both, and whose voice is raised in every good cause that makes for righteousness, fair dealing, and earnest endeavor—a man who needs no introduction to this audience, and I have great pleasure in presenting Bishop McVickar, who will now address us on the subject of “The Church and Child Labor.”

BISHOP MCVICKAR:

Rhode Island is not the largest state in the Union, but as in the past Rhode Island has its part to play, and it has always played its part well in all the great struggles through which our country has passed. It holds to its tradition.

I am glad to be here with you to-night, for although I feel the responsibility, I hail the opportunity of representing God's Church as well as Rhode Island in the matter which we have in hand. And I am glad that the Church should be placed in the very forefront, as the follower of Him who once called a little child unto Him and set him in the midst of His disciples, bidding them remember that whoso should offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. And since that day the Church has stood in the very front rank in defense of childhood, as of all other dependent ones. And I am glad therefore that the Church should be associated, as it is on this program, with all other noble forces for good; and, first of all, side by side with the school. The great function of the Church, as set forth by its Master, was a teach-

ing function. It was sent to teach—to teach the fundamental principles of right and truth. And I cannot forget that through all those long ages, when darkness seemed to threaten the world, that it was under the protection of the Church that learning as well as right and truth found their home.

I am glad, too, to be associated with organized labor, and only wish that my brother, who is on the program to represent that body, were here to-night, instead of absent. I should like to thank him personally for the part that organized labor has taken against this great evil. Only the other day, when some of us in Rhode Island appeared before the committee of our legislature, to plead for the passage of a bill for the better protection of little children from oppressive labor, one of the noblest pleas, one of the most forcible ones, was made in the name of organized labor by a man who was its true representative.

I am glad, too, to be associated also with one who stands here to-night to represent the employer. We have no quarrel with any class; we have no quarrel with labor; we have no quarrel with capital. It is to the interest of labor that the character of its employment should be raised and its morale be heightened, and it is to the interests of capital that the best sort of labor should be kept in the market and on a high level. We have no trouble with any class, nor with any individual except the one who represents the meanest and most short-sighted greed—for it comes to that at last, and I never realized this more completely than when I listened and heard the various pleas for and against improved legislation for the protection of our children in Rhode Island; and I realized for my brothers who came to speak against the law that we were urging, that they did it with shamed faces, and that in the last analysis even they felt that it was essentially the dollar against childhood.

I shall never forget the first time this problem presented itself to me. I went to visit a mill village in my diocese and there stood up before me a class for "confirmation." As I looked at them it seemed to me that they were very small; rather young for the rite. After the services, when I was with the minister and his family in his own home, I said to him: "Weren't those very young children to be presented?"

He replied: "They were not young. Why do you think so?"

"They looked so small and puny."

Said he: "Ah, but that is not because they are so young, but because they have not had a chance to grow."

And then the wife went on to say that she was the teacher of a Sunday-school class of boys and girls, and among them were those fourteen and fifteen years old who could not read or write, and she added, "how can it be expected that they should?" And then she told me how, in that village, in the early morning, before daylight, the whole family in the house would be up, and after a hasty meal, father, mother, children, each and all of them, would go to the mill and were there until the evening. Then, in order to conform to the requirements of law, as to the education of children, an evening school was conducted where, for two hours, these little children, tired and fagged in mind and body, were gathered and the absurd pretense was made of teaching them something, when their brains were in no condition to take anything in. Then it seemed to me the problem stood before me in all its horrors. I realized the truth of the tales and descriptions that I had heard of the factory system, of the mills and mines, where little children, made to work through the long, weary hours, day or night, soon became haggard, stunted and deformed, and caricatures of age, before they had more than tasted of childhood; old and wasted when they should be fresh with the dews of childhood. It seemed to me, too, that the picture could not be painted in color or form too darkly or too abhorrently. That picture, in all its hideousness, is not to be taken alone from Rhode Island. Rhode Island, while not foremost in its legislation for the protection of children, does not stand entirely in the rear in this matter; and when I speak of Rhode Island, it is simply to illustrate, what in some other places may be found in more aggravated form. Rhode Island has her faults, but she has her virtues, too, and she has her conscience; and her conscience is thoroughly stirred to-day, and we shall hear within the next week of her improved child labor legislation in response to her recently awakened sensibility. She has her problems to meet, but she is going to meet them as she has met her problems in the past. I don't want anybody here, least of all the reporters, to say that I have held up Rhode Island to scorn. Not the largest in extent of territory among the states, she still has a noble history and she will ever be fulfilling that history.

And now, in conclusion, let me say again, that the Church takes her place and raises her voice in this great campaign. The Church

has been misunderstood at times. She has been thought to lag in public movements, when people have tried to gain her influence for some specific cause, and she has refused to come down into the arena of party strife. But we all know that she ever stands for the cause of righteousness; nor only that, but she stands for that "Philanthropy Divine" of which the poet has spoken, which extends its interest over all humanity, and most certainly so in her care of the weak, and of those least able to care for themselves.

The Church does one other thing. She sends into the world men and women, well equipped and inspired with the highest ideals, to do her work in every department of life,—to be better men and women, in business and society, better citizens in the state. That is what the Church does, and I am thankful to say that the Church can be depended upon for that. And it is to Christian citizenship that the matter of child labor makes a strong appeal. What is to become of the state if its future citizens are allowed to be stunted and contorted by unhallowed use, and forced to grow up stupid and illiterate? It has been said by a wise writer that the experiment of democratic government is still in its early stages. Our land has passed through many crises, and God grant that it may pass triumphantly through the crises which still confront it as those of the past! But if the republic is to continue to exist, and to go on and develop, and become all that it is intended to become, its citizenship must be of the highest order. Those from other lands, under different rules, must be enlightened. Our citizenship must be educated, its morale must be high. To-day, the problem that menaces this country—one of its greatest—is as to its ability to assimilate the vast tide of immigration which is inundating our shores unparalleled in all history, whether America can assimilate that great mass, strongly tintured as it is with ignorance. Shall that ignorance be only added to and darkened by the coming home-born generation?

My friends, I congratulate you upon the wave of awakened feeling which is passing over this country at the present time, awakened only within the last few years, scarcely more, and of which this and like meetings are an abundant indication.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am sure that we all, and particularly those who are connected with the work of our National Committee, realize the necessity of having the moral forces of the community back of

any great movement. What Bishop McVickar has said of this work has been said also by representatives of other branches of the church—Protestant and Catholic and Jewish.

But there is an institution in society to which the obligation to protect childhood has been given over in a special sense—the school, which stands sponsor for the education of the child in all its various departments, from the kindergarten to the university. I think we are especially favored to-night in having for the representative of that institution one who has stood for years as the leader of the higher educational thought of the South, who is in thorough sympathy and accord with the best life and best thought of the South; and I am glad to say that he has consented to come so far to speak to us to-night on the topic of “The School as a Force Arrayed Against the Evils of Child Labor.” [Dr. Kirkland’s address appears in full in this volume of proceedings.]

We have already heard from organized labor in the letter that Mr. Clark has sent to us, expressing his regret at his inability to be here to-night. I do not think there has been a single discordant note in the reports that have come from organized labor in all parts of the country and in their agreement in their position with respect to the evils of child labor. President Gompers has written very strongly on this subject, representing the American Federation of Labor; John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers, has written on several occasions in connection with the work of our committee, endorsing every feature of its propaganda.

In addition to the letter received from Mr. E. E. Clark, which was read at the meeting, Mr. Clark has sent a communication to the committee which he would have presented had he been able to be present and take part personally in the program. His communication on the subject of “The Restriction of Child Labor” sets forth briefly and forcibly the position of organized labor, and is as follows:

The first instance in which any important number of workingmen acted in unison in opposition to wishes or edicts of an employer probably had nothing behind it except a desire and determination to secure relief from some condition which laid upon them a burden that had become intolerable. That such unity of action could be used offensively as well as defensively was not thought of at that

time. The children of Israel, acting in unison, refused longer to make bricks without straw and when Pharaoh provided them with the straw they meekly returned to their work.

Out of such a beginning grew the idea of organized effort among workers to not only defend themselves against oppression but to secure advantages which had been dreamed of by the individual but had been looked upon as impossible of attainment.

The next step in the progress of the movement was a realization on part of the more thoughtful ones of the fact that, in addition to the work of combatting injustice and striving for better conditions for the present day, it was possible to accomplish much of good for the morrow and the days which are to follow the morrow. And so, organized labor has ranged itself alongside of every effort to improve permanently the conditions under which those who earn their bread in the sweat of the brow perform, and are to perform, their labor.

Mistakes have been made by and in the name of organized labor. The same is true of every element or feature that enters, or has entered, into the civilization of the human race, not excepting the Christian religion, but, on the whole, organized labor has contributed in no small degree to the higher standard of civilization which now obtains, and it is steadily increasing its influence for good in direct ratio with its growing intelligence and its intensifying desire to build for the welfare of those that are to come after.

Organized labor has not been impelled by a selfishness of the day and hour when it has sought to have the greatest possible degree of safety thrown around those engaged in hazardous employment; to have sanitary conditions succeed unsanitary ones; to prevent the employment of women at night work or in callings which, from their very nature are destructive of female health, and to prevent as far as is reasonably possible the employment of children in work and under conditions which of themselves cry abroad the heartlessness of commercialism in this day and age.

It is indeed a cheering sign to see an active and organized interest in the subject of child labor on part of men and women, who, having achieved success in their several fields of effort, are willing to give of their influence and their time to this humane and worthy cause. And I have no hesitation about pledging to that effort the most cordial support of organized labor and giving



assurance that the movement will be given all the impetus possible from that source. Organized labor has set its face and its efforts against child labor, and, having laid its hand on the plow, will not turn back.

The workingman, even though he may be uncouth and of rough exterior, feels in his heart the same impulses of love for helpmeet and offspring that are felt by the more polished and refined man of higher intellect or gentler calling. The American workingman has a strong desire to see his children enjoy advantages which he himself did not, and could not, have. He knows that the elements which must enter into a higher and better civilization are more intelligence, more education, higher morals and a more perfect physical development. He knows that none of these are to be attained or even hoped for by the child whose early and tender years are spent in grinding, exacting, wearying toil; whose joy of the present and hope of the future are lost in the never ceasing din and whirl of shop and factory; whose childhood knows none of childhood's happiness and whose prospects for a healthy manhood or womanhood are practically absent. The American workingman in his organized capacity opposes the employment of children during the years when their days should be spent in study and in healthful exercise and amusement out in God's sunlight.

It is a difficult thing to awaken a strong public sentiment on a subject which does not appeal to the patriotism of the people or which does not affect their immediate, individual interests. It is by far too common for people to look upon every effort as one calculated to advance the material welfare of someone, even though that someone cannot be found. Too often support and assistance for worthy causes are withheld or refused because it is erroneously believed that some ulterior motive is behind the movement. Organized labor alone in a crusade against child labor would be obliged to combat all the natural obstacles which must be met, and, in addition, would be charged with having no higher purpose than to secure the removal of children from employment in order that their places might be filled with grown people at higher rates of compensation. But those who are now lending their energies and their substance to this work cannot be charged with selfish motives or commercial purposes, and, in this work at least, the philanthropist, the economist, the employer, the sociologist and the trades unionist

can, and will, work to a common purpose and toward an end most devoutly to be wished for.

It might appear at first thought as though all energies should be first centered upon the localities and industries where child labor is most prevalent and where the conditions are the worst. Of course those are the places where there is greatest room for improvement, but what is needed is a rousing of the whole people. This is a subject which seems to be within the jurisdiction of the several states, each for itself. If one state should enact laws to put a stop to the employment of children in that state, there is every probability that the industries thus affected would transfer their operation to a neighboring state, and so long as there is the possibility of the industry being transferred across the state line, there to thrive as before, the willingness of state legislators to enact desired laws may be doubted. It, therefore, appears that in the states where the evil exists in the smaller degrees there is room for effective work. If laws are there enacted which would prevent such states from being used as a refuge by industries now employing large numbers of children, the probabilities of success in attacking the system through the legislatures in states where it is now strongly entrenched would be increased. There is practically no hope of better conditions except through legislation. Appeals to the humanity of those who employ children would fall on deaf ears. Organized labor, wherever found, may be depended upon to give cordial and earnest support to efforts to secure the desired, or the best possible, legislation.

That the employment of large numbers of children through long hours day after day and week after week has a blighting effect, morally and physically, upon the coming and on succeeding generations is apparent to the most superficial observer. No one but a degenerate can look upon this subject without feeling a stirring of the heart. The one who, having had his attention called to it, fails to express condemnation of it or withholds encouragement to every proper effort to overcome the evils which are inherent in the employment of children, in effect, though perhaps thoughtlessly, re-echoes the denial of responsibility for his brother's welfare.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** Another important factor in the forces arrayed against child labor is the employer himself. As Dr. Kirkland has said, first of all we hold responsible the school. Where we have

the school to guard the children properly we place them in its care, not letting them get beyond the pale of the school until they are fully prepared in their development for the responsibilities of life. Wherever there is proper parental responsibility we keep the child in that care until it is fitted for the physical obligations of modern industrial life. But, above all, we hold responsible the employer, and, I assure you, in the course of our work we meet all kinds of employers. Not long ago the owner of a large western factory, the employer of many people, took me through his plant. We came upon a little girl who, he said, earned \$7 a week at piece work. Bent over her machine, she was working as fast as her arms could move. On hearing our voices in passing, she looked up, and when I saw her flushed face already indicating physical disability I asked her employer: "How much will she earn five years hence if she continues at this work?" And the reply was: "I presume we shall have to have another girl in her place by that time." This is a type of the uneducated and the short-sighted employer.

Another employer said to one of our secretaries in the course of an investigation not long ago, pointing to a group of boys: "Look into the faces of these boys, and you can see that they are not fitted for anything else. You must be careful not to be too much of a providence to people who are born for another kind of existence. I shall oppose every effort that is made for improved child labor legislation in this state." This is an employer of another type—one who has neither education nor heart.

On the other hand, there is a large number of employers who take a different attitude. One of the largest employers of labor in the District of Columbia recently addressed a child labor committee in favor of supporting a bill fixing the age limit at fourteen, and in the course of his remarks he said: "I believe it is an outrage, with our present opportunities for education, to deprive a child of the opportunity to enjoy these opportunities. With our present business facilities I think it is also an outrage to put the burdens of industry on young children. I want none of them in my employ." With that sentence he stamped the committee, and they were unanimously in favor of the bill.

There are, also, employers who take a larger economic view, and who realize that it is to their own interest to favor the giving of larger opportunities to the child. But they are rare. One em-

ployer in Pennsylvania, where there are now three bills for improved child labor legislation pending before the legislature, has said: "I do not want any children under sixteen years of age in my employ. I do not believe it pays to have children. It pays better to pay higher wages to adult workers and get the greater concentration of effort which adult labor can bring."

And because we meet with all kinds of employers we want to hear, in their language, the attitude which they assume in general in the fight we are waging against child labor, and we are glad to have with us to-night one who can present this subject so sympathetically from the employer's standpoint as Dr. Hirsch. [Dr. Hirsch's paper appears in full in this volume.]

The list of forces arrayed against child labor, or that may be arrayed against child labor, is by no means complete upon our program. There is one force, perhaps greater than any one of these, or even greater than them all, and that is the force of the great public at large, the great force of public sentiment, the force to which you and I—all of us here—may contribute.

I have sometimes felt, in looking over the list of those who have joined our committee from all parts of the country—representing all shades of political creed and religious faith, and the interests of the employer and the employed—that there could not be brought together a more remarkable array of busy and representative persons, who have been willing to give part of their time and thought to this great cause. I am much encouraged by the meeting to-night, for I appreciate that in the midst of the busy season in New York, with its many attractions, the presence of this large audience is significant of a wider public interest in this question of child labor than many of us dared to hope for. The thought which we all need to take home with us is: How can we translate these beautiful sentiments to which reference has been made here to-night into legislation and social work that will make child labor impossible in every part of the country. We must remove the evils of child labor by placing upon our statute books effective legislation and by seeing that such laws are respected and enforced.

The second session was opened by Mr. Isaac N. Seligman, who took the chair in the absence of the vice-chairman of the National Committee and who introduced the following speakers: Mr. Owen R. Lovejoy, Judge Ben B. Lindsey, Mrs. Florence Kelley, Rev.

Neal L. Anderson and Mrs. A. O. Granger. All of these addresses are printed in full in this volume, and in addition to them a paper by Hon. Halford Erickson, Commissioner of Labor of Wisconsin, on "Child Labor Legislation—Methods of Enforcement in the Northern Central States," and a paper by Mr. Hugh F. Fox, president of the Children's Protective Alliance of New Jersey, upon "The Operation of the New Child Labor Law in New Jersey." Mr. Fox's paper was contributed through the Department of Philanthropy, Charities and Social Problems of THE ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, and included here as properly belonging with the subject matter of this meeting. Mr. Erickson's paper was one of those read by title. The papers of Dr. L. Emmet Holt, of New York City, on "Some Physiological Reasons why Premature Employment of Children under Modern Industrial Conditions is a Menace to the Race," and of the secretary, Dr. Samuel McCune Lindsay, on "What the State Owes the Child," were read by title and are reserved for future publication.

Both the first and second sessions were largely attended by representative audiences, which taxed the limits of the seating capacity of the assembly hall of the United Charities Building.

The third session of the annual meeting was perhaps the most interesting of all the sessions of the annual meeting. It took place in Cooper Union under the joint auspices of the National Child Labor Committee and the People's Institute. Approximately sixteen hundred people, made up of the rank and file of the thinking people among the working classes of the lower East Side of New York, with a sprinkling representation from all sections of the city, listened to inspiring addresses from the speakers on the program. Dr. Felix Adler, the chairman of the committee, was again detained by illness and the secretary acted as the presiding officer. Dr. McKelway spoke on "The Child Labor Situation in Southern Industry," and Miss Jane Addams, of Hull House, on "Child Labor Legislation as a Requisite for Industrial Efficiency." Both of these papers are printed in full in this volume of proceedings. In addition to these, brief addresses were made by Judge Lindsey, who spoke with much fervor upon "Positive Work for the Development of Youth in Social Virtues, Industry and Knowledge," and also by Hon. Edgar T. Davies, Chief Factory Inspector of the State of Illinois, who spoke of the work of the Department of Factory Inspection in the enforcement

of child labor legislation and who illustrated from results already obtained in Illinois what an active and efficient department of factory inspection may do to make such legislation effective.

The annual meeting of the National Child Labor Committee adjourned at the close of the session held in Cooper Union, its members feeling that the work before it constituted a large task which could not be completed in a single year, nor, indeed, in several years of persistent effort. But the general feeling also prevailed that the forces of the community had responded to the call for special effort in this direction in a way to encourage the belief that they were numerous enough and strong enough to cope with these great evils and to overcome both the greed of employers and the greed of parents, who are willing to sacrifice the interest of their children for the sake of personal gain. The advance already made in legislation setting up an American standard on this subject and in the enforcement of state legislation encourages us to believe that the day is not far distant when the true interests of the children within the state may be deemed paramount to every other consideration of commercial prosperity.